

(2) The Commission may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other departments and agencies of the United States.

(3) The General Services Administration shall provide to the Commission on a reimbursable basis the administrative support services that the Commission may request.

(4) The Commission may enter into contracts with Federal and State agencies, private firms, institutions, and individuals to assist the Commission in carrying out its duties. The Commission may purchase and contract without regard to section 303 of the Federal Property and Administration Services Act of 1949 (41 U.S.C. 253), section 18 of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act (41 U.S.C. 416), and section 8 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637), pertaining to competition and publication requirements, and may arrange for printing without regard to the provisions of title 44, United States Code. The contracting authority of the Commission under this Act is effective only to the extent that appropriations are available for contracting purposes.

(h) **REPORT.**—The Commission shall submit to the President, via the Council, and to the Congress not later than 18 months after the establishment of the Commission, a final report of its findings and recommendations. The Commission shall cease to exist 30 days after it has submitted its final report.

(i) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to support the activities of the Commission a total of up to \$6,000,000 for fiscal years 1998 and 1999. Any sums appropriated shall remain available without fiscal year limitation until the Commission ceases to exist.

#### SEC. 7. REPORT AND BUDGET COORDINATION.

(a) **BIENNIAL REPORT.**—Beginning in January, 1999, the President shall transmit to the Congress biennially a report, which shall include—

(1) a comprehensive description of the ocean and coastal activities (and budgets) and related accomplishments of all agencies and departments of the United States during the preceding two fiscal years; and

(2) an evaluation of such activities (and budgets) and accomplishments in terms of the purpose and objectives of this Act. Reports made under this section shall contain such recommendations for legislation as the President may consider necessary or desirable.

(b) **BUDGET COORDINATION.**—

(1) Each year the President shall provide general guidance to each Federal agency or department involved in ocean or coastal activities with respect to the preparation of requests for appropriations.

(2) Each agency or department involved in such activities shall include with its annual request for appropriations a report which—

(A) identifies significant elements of the proposed agency or department budget relating to ocean and coastal activities; and

(B) specifies how each such element contributes to the implementation of a national ocean and coastal policy.

#### SEC. 8. REPEAL OF 1966 STATUTE.

The Marine Resources and Engineering Development Act of 1966 (33 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.) is repealed.

### NOTICE OF HEARING

#### COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Subcommittee on Forests and Public Land Management of the Senate Com-

mittee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The hearing will take place Monday, December 15, 1997 at 1:00 p.m. in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, D.C.

The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony on S. 1253, the Public Land Management Improvement Act of 1997.

Those who wish to submit written statements should write to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. For further information, please call Judy Brown or Mark Rey at (202) 224-6170.

### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

#### VETERANS DAY 1997

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, today I wish to pay deep respect and tribute to the men and women of the United States who have made significant sacrifices in the defense of the freedoms and democratic principles upon which our country was founded and to which we pledge our allegiance today. For every American, Veterans Day holds a special meaning because it is a time to remember those veterans who have died, thank those who are living, and reflect on the honorable contributions that each has made to our country. People of all ages and backgrounds marched in parades across the United States on November 11 honoring veterans whom often they have never met, nor seen, nor heard about—and who too often have received little or no recognition for their unwavering devotion to our country.

As a veteran of the Vietnam war, I share a memory with many others who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces and ascribe a special meaning to this day. We remember the faces of those who served with us and the experiences of those who served beside us. History will remember the cause, but we will remember the people.

I am proud to have served my country and feel blessed that I was lucky enough to return to my family and friends. To those brave men and women who gave their lives for our country or who have survived but paid in human suffering, we collectively owe a great debt and appropriate recognition and respect. We must never forget their service, or their sacrifice, nor must we forget their significance.●

#### HELP FOR LOCALITIES

• Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, one of the final items to be approved by the Senate for inclusion in the fiscal year 1998 Senate Interior appropriations bill was my amendment to raise the level of funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program, or PILT. I want to thank the Interior appropriations chairman, Senator GORTON, for his assistance and consideration of this im-

portant amendment. I also wish to thank my cosponsors, Senators LEVIN, HATCH, CAMPBELL, SMITH, and Dominici. In particular, I am most appreciative of Senator LEVIN, his hard work and cooperation in securing the support of the subcommittee's ranking member was crucial.

Every year, Mr. President, the Federal Government increases the acreage it owns, particularly in the form of national parks. This provides increased opportunities for Americans to enjoy the great outdoors. At the same time, however, it also increases costs for law enforcement, search and rescue and fire departments for literally thousands of small towns throughout our Nation.

Federal land purchases often permanently remove a critical source of income from local communities. PILT payments, or "Payments in Lieu of Taxes," are made to counties and local communities which contain certain federally owned lands that cannot be taxed or, in many cases, developed by the local governments. PILT moneys are often the only means that counties have to pay for police protection and garbage collection and storage as well as funding for one time capital investments for new schools, hospitals, and jails. They also are vital for offsetting costs incurred by counties for services provided users of public lands.

Unfortunately, Mr. President, and despite the very real benefits local communities provide, every year more Federal lands are taken off of county tax rolls, while PILT payments remain stagnant and well below the level authorized by Congress.

That is why my colleagues and I took action to reverse this trend, and why I am so pleased that the Senate has agreed to raise PILT payments to \$124 million. I believe this increase has significance beyond the amount approved because it demonstrates that the Congress is beginning to understand the dilemma faced by a significant number of our localities, struggling as they are with increasing costs and a shrinking tax base.

During the conference of the House and Senate, Members agreed to a compromise funding level of \$20 million. I suspect that the increased Senate amount was partially responsible for the conferees agreeing to an amount \$7 million above the House level. These extra funds will provide crucial help to local communities strapped for funds as they seek to tend to their own citizens' needs. It has been a long time coming and I applaud the Senate for agreeing to support this critical program.●

**CONFIRMATION OF RODNEY W. SIPPEL TO BE A UNITED STATES JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN AND WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI**

• Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am delighted that the Senate unanimously confirmed Rodney W. Sippel to serve as